on the Government. The Spices Board has been advised to devise a suitable scheme in the light of this policy.

Empanelment of 1962 batch of IAS Officers

*434. SHRI S. AUSTIN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether government have received direct representations from the officers and also the public representatives about the grievances expressed regarding empanelment of 1962 batch of IAS officers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that some officers from 1962 batch who served as long as ten years in international agencies have been empanelled as Secretaries;

(d) if so, the details of officers of 1962 batch who have been empanelled as Secretaries after serving for six years or more abroad;

(e) in what way will the experience of such officers be useful to Government of India and

(f) whether Government would review the promotion and empanelment of such officers who have spent a large part of their career abroad with the international agencies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Representations have been received in respect of 4 IAS officers of 1962 batch for review of their cases for empanelment to hold a Secretary level posts at the Centre.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) There are no such officers.

(e) The experience gained by the officers during their employment in the international agencies is useful to the Government of India in view of the global perspectives and insights acquired in relation to different areas of public administration.

(f) No such proposal is under consideration of the Government.

Advance to Russia for Purchase of Tobacco.

*435. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO :
DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Govt. of India have given ad-hoc advance to the Govt. of Russia for import of Tobacco from India;

(b) if so, what is the amount;

(c) whether the advance has been fully utilised for the same purpose by the Russian Government;

(d) to what extent this ad-hoc advance has been helpful to the Tobacco growers in India;

(e) whether such arrangement is made for other items also; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Rs. 100 crores.

(c) An amount of Rs. 94.37 crores has already been utilised for purchase of Tobacco.

(d) Because of the release of ad-hoc advance, declining trend of auction floor prices in the Northern and Central Black Soil Regions was reversed. Had the uncertainty regarding Russian purchases continued, the market situation would have been much worse.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

India's balance of trade position during the last three years

*436. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL *ALIAS* MEEM AFZAL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) in what manner India's balance of trade compares with the corresponding figures at the close of the last three financial years; and

(b) what concrete steps are contemplated to achieve positive balance of trade figure ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) Figures of India's balance of trade for the last three financial years and for April-June '93, the latest period for which such data are available, are as under :

Year	Balance of Trade (US $ Million)
1990-91	—5930
1991-92	—1546
1992-93	—3305
1993-94 (April—June)	—301
1992-93 (April—June)	—1564

(b) The Government have taken major steps for liberalisation of trade which include provisions, such as, exports-linked imports, reduction of import licensing, strengthening export incentives, removal of procedural irritants, simplification of policy and procedures and pruning of negative lists of imports and exports. In the 93-94 budget, system of market determined unified exchange rate has been introduced, customs and excise duties reduced on raw materials and capital goods and interest rate on rupee export credit has been reduced. The Exim Policy 92—97 has been amended to include the scheme of Export Oriented Units for agricultural and allied products. The State Governments are also being involved in export promotion efforts. An Exporter's Redressal Cell has been set up in the Commerce Ministry to facilitate action on problems being faced by exporters. Need-based imports have been permitted consisting mainly of raw material, components and capital goods required for production. As a result of these steps the trade deficit during April-June '93 is considerably lower at US $ 301 million compared to US $ 1564 million during the corresponding period of previous year.

Assessment of export performance is a continuous and ongoing activity. Government is always responsive to suggestions which are conducive to export growth and steps are taken to remove these problems.

Opening of an Industry Information Centre

*437. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to open an industry information centre for small scale industrialists in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details of the centres;

(c) whether Government propose to open similar centres in other parts of the country; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES) (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM):

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir. According to Delhi Administration, a joint Centre of Delhi State Industrial Development Corporation — Technology Information Forecasting and Assessment Council —CMC Ltd. was opened in N block, Connaught Place on 14th August, 1993.

(b) It will act as an Information Centre for providing data on non-ferrous material, Food Processing, Energy and Environmental Technologies initially and would add in phases other data bases as well. The main function would be to provide data and information to industries regarding technology sources, possibility of setting up joint ventures with foreign companies.

(c) and (d) At present there is no proposal to open similar centres in other States. After watching the performance of this Centre, Government would consider setting up similar centres in other parts of the Country. On the other hand, Small Industries Service Institutes located in different States and District Industries Centres provide necessary information and guidance to the small scale industrialists. Small Industries Service Institute, New Delhi also provides information to small scale industrialists in Delhi.

धार्मिक स्थानों को हवाई मार्ग से जोड़ा जाना

*438. श्री सुशील कुमार संभाजीराव शिन्दे: क्या नागर विमानन और पर्यटन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि सरकार देश के महत्वपूर्ण धार्मिक स्थानों को हवाई मार्ग से जोड़ने का विचार रखती है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) महाराष्ट्र के किन-किन धार्मिक स्थानों को जोड़ा जाएगा;

(घ) क्या यह सच है कि महाराष्ट्र सरकार ने शिर्डी में हवाई अड्डा बनाने के लिए भूमि उपलब्ध करवायी है और राज्य सरकार द्वारा अन्य आवश्यक सहायता उपलब्ध करवाने का आश्वासन दिए जाने के बावजूद केन्द्र सरकार वहां हवाई अड्डे के निर्माण के लिए कोई कार्यवाही नहीं कर रही है;

(ङ) यदि हां, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं; और

(च) शिर्डी को कब तक वायुमार्ग मानचित्र पर लाया जाएगा?